

Icehouse Game Design Competition Summer 2008 Entries

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Albiorix by Don Sheldon		
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Albiorix

Like other major Roman deities, Mars had a large number of epithets representing his different roles and aspects. Mars **Albiorix**, used the epithet meaning "King of the World" and was regarded as a mountain god. No one knows what happened to the ancient civilization of Mars but recent findings point to one significant historical event: a world-wide civil war, the winner of which was no less than the king of their world.

This may have been the only civil war which was genuinely civil (i.e. polite). In Albiorix pieces are never captured and removed from the board but are instead transformed and subverted with a strong likelihood that the procedure can be reversed. Victory is decided when the opponent's monarch is permanently subverted.

Setup

The game is played by two players on a [volcano board](#). Each player takes one stash (the author suggests monochrome stashes but it would be possible, though difficult, to play with unmatched treehouse sets). At the beginning of the game each side will have eight pieces. Seven are "Diads" made of two pyramids stacked on top of each other and one, the "Monad", which stands alone. This is that player's monarch and is the focal point of the game.

Pieces are initially placed on opposite corners thusly:

```
| 3-3 | 2-1 |  
+-----+-----+-----  
| 3-1 | 1-1 | 2-1      x: a single pyramid with x pips  
+-----+-----+-----  
| 3   | 2-2 | 3-2      x-y: a pyramid with x pips under a pyramid with y pips  
+-----+-----+-----
```

Goal

The object is to *begin* your turn with both Monads in your control at which point both sides of the Civil War declare your side to be the King of the World. (This is the same as your opponent *ending* their turn without a Monad.)

Albiorix

[Don Sheldon](#)

A chess-like game without captures

Players: 2

Icehouse stashes: one per player
(i.e. 2)

**Other [volcano board](#)
equipment:**

Setup time: 2 minutes

Playing time: 20 minutes

**Rules
complexity:** Medium

Strategy depth: Deep (I hope)

Random chance: None

Mechanics: Chess-like

Theme: Martian Civil
War

BGG Link:

Play

Whichever player has seen Mars more recently goes first. (The planet, the god, whatever. In person, through a telescope, in art, whatever.) Further games in the same sitting should alternate the first player.

Turns alternate between players. A turn consists of either *moving* one piece to an unoccupied location or *mixing* that piece with another. Mixing is somewhat analagous to capturing in Chess but, rather than moving to the target's location and removing the target, the various pyramids in the target and attacker are reconfigured to make two new pieces.

The way in which a piece moves is determined by the makeup of its pyramids. Pieces may mix (capture) to the same locations that they can move. A piece may mix with any other pieces, even those controlled by the player moving it.

Generally, pieces made of larger pyramids have more dramatic moves than those made of smaller pyramids and Pieces made of identically sized pyramids are more potent than those made of mixed pyramids. However, smaller pyramids are more powerful in mixing than larger ones and homogenous pieces require more focussed resources than mixed ones.

A player may move (or mix) any piece in which:

- His side's color is the top (or only) pyramid
- A piece identical (in size and color) to his Monad is contained

It is possible (and likely) that both players will be able to move the same piece on their turns.

Mixing

The Martian Civil War is a battle of hearts and minds. Soldiers are not lost to death, merely to a new way of thinking.

A piece can be mixed with any piece at a location it could move to. The pyramids involved (usually four, sometimes three, and possibly only two) are used to make two new pieces following these simple rules:

- There must be two pieces
- Each piece can have no more than two pyramids in it
- In each piece the top pyramid can be no larger than the bottom pyramid
- A player may not leave themselves without a Monad as this would be suicidal

One piece is placed where the attacker originated from, the other where the target had been. The player may recreate the original pieces but in this case must place them in the opposite of their original locations, otherwise nothing has changed and, as this would be equivalent to skipping a turn, is not allowed.

Obviously, a major goal of mixing is to create two pieces under your control, but it may be strategically beneficial to do otherwise.

Repetition of moves

Similar to the Ko rule in Go, Albiorix does not allow repetition. Unlike the Ko rule however, it is repetition of *moves* that is disallowed, not repetition of *positions*. If the first player makes a particular move (or mix), the second player is allowed to *exactly* reverse it (assuming that such is a legal move) and the first player must now make a *different* move. This repetition only applies to consecutive turns (like weak Ko) and it should be customary for the second player to state verbally that he is reversing the preceding move.

Pieces

3-3 - General - The General moves boldly but is easily converted however, he is always loyal to his Queen. The General moves in any of six directions: all four orthogonal directions and the two forward diagonals. (Like a Chess Rook and half a Bishop, or a Gold General Rider.) He must stop when he reaches another piece.

3-2 - Diplomat - The Diplomat travels far, but never alone. Like the General he is loyal to the Queen. The Diplomat moves in any of five directions: all four diagonals or directly forward. (Like a Chess Bishop and a Pawn, or a Silver General Rider.) He must pass over one piece and must stop no farther than the second.

2-2 - Bureaucrat - The Bureaucrat can squirm his way into almost anywhere. Unsurprisingly he is always loyal to the Regent. The Bureaucrat moves up to three spaces orthogonally but can change direction at will. He may not return to where he began and cannot move through another piece (only into one, with which he must mix).

3-1 - Dancer - The Dancer inspires the enemy to join her cause by extolling the virtues of her Monad. She is always loyal to the Queen. The Dancer moves in a way similar to the Bureaucrat but, instead of three orthogonal steps, she takes two diagonal ones.

2-1 - Soldier - The Soldier is not alone, play begins with two. The Soldier, unlike the General, is loyal to the Regent. The Soldier moves as a Chess Knight but only while advancing.

```
s . s . .   S: starting position of the Soldier
. . . s .   s: possible ending position of the Soldier
. S . . .   <: the location pointed at is NOT a possible destination
. . . .<.
.<. .<. .
```

1-1 - Artist - The Artist must study his subject carefully, but once his work is complete it is difficult to refute his arguments. The Artist is the only piece loyal to the Princess. It is not possible to tempt the Artist from how he feels. The artist moves one space orthogonally, or as far as two if moving forward, assuming no other piece interceeds.

3, 2, 1 - Queen, Regent, Princess - The Monads must go on, lest the war be lost. By interaction with their subjects, a new Monad may come in to power. All Monads move in the same way, one space in any of eight directions (like a Chess King).

Retrieved from "<http://icehousegames.org/wiki/index.php?title=Albiorix>"

Categories: [Games Under Development/Initial Design](#) | [Chessboard](#) | [2-player](#)

Ambush

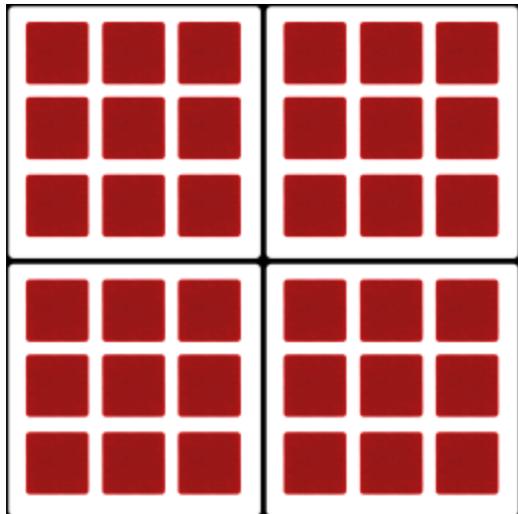
Ambush is an abstract strategy game for 2 players. Two stashes, one per player and 4 Martian Coasters are needed. Players will either play one of their 15 pyramids on the board or set a pyramid aside to rotate a coaster. Either action may allow them to capture a pyramid belonging to their opponent. The winner is the player who has captured the most pips worth of opposing pyramids.

Components

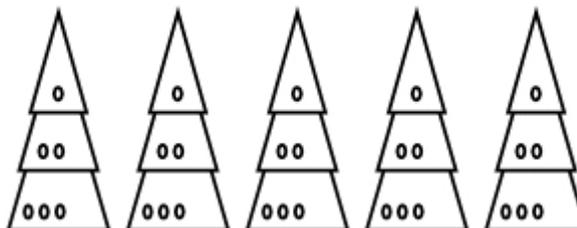
Each player gets 15 pyramids in a single color, 1 stash, (5 small, 5 medium, 5 large.)

Setup

Lay 4 Martian Coasters out in a 2x2 grid. Players arrange their pyramids into 5 trees. (Small on medium, medium on large, 5 stacks.) Pick a player to go first. (The tallest, flip a coin, highest roll on a die, whatever.)



Arrange all pyramids into five trees, like so:



Playing a pyramid

Players can only pick a pyramid from the top of their trees. (So on the first turn a player can only choose a small pyramid, then turn after a small or a medium, and so on.) Players can play a pyramid onto any space on the board, so long as it is empty or contains a piece of their color. If a player plays an additional pyramid in a square, then stack it on top of any pyramids already there. So a 2 pip pyramid will cover a 1 pip, while adding to the strength of a 3 pip pyramid.

Ambush

Designed by [Jason Spears](#) & [Erik Oosterwal](#)

Players: 2

Icehouse stashes: 2

Other [Martian Coasters](#) equipment:

Setup time: 1 minute or less

Playing time: 10-25 minutes

Rules complexity: Low

Strategy depth: Medium

Random chance: None

Mechanics: Beverage-coaster manipulation

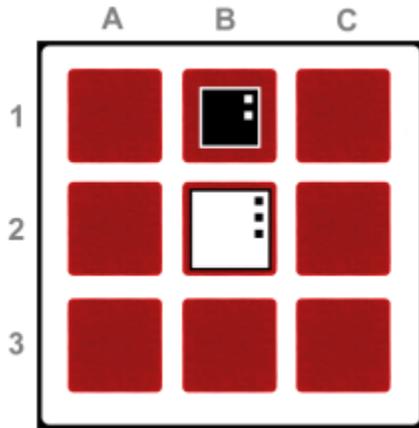
Theme: Abstract

BGG Link: [35366](#)

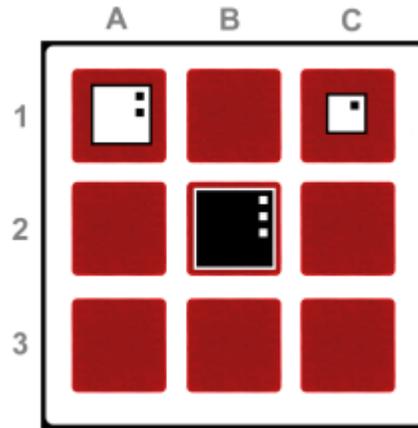
Capture

If the piece played is adjacent to an opponents piece, there is the possibility of a capture. Including when a player puts a second (or third) piece in a single square. If the opponents piece now has two pieces of your color on two opposing sides of it and the total number of visible pips is more than the pips in the square between then you may take one of your opponents pieces. If your opponent has multiple pieces in a single square, you may only take the one on top.

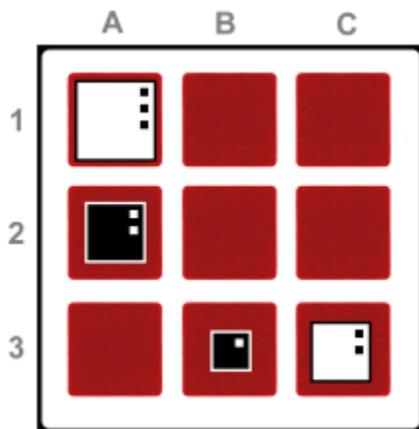
Examples



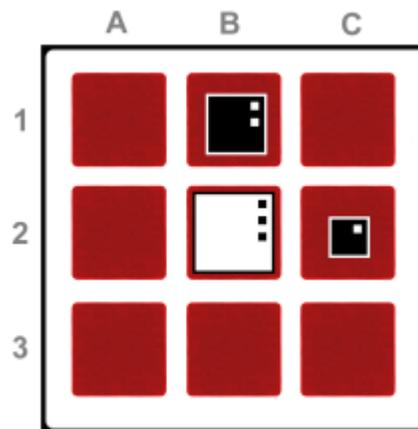
Here if Black places a 2 pip or 3 pip pyramid on B3 they will capture the 3 pip white pyramid. If they only have 1 pip pyramids available, they will be unable to capture the white pyramid this turn.



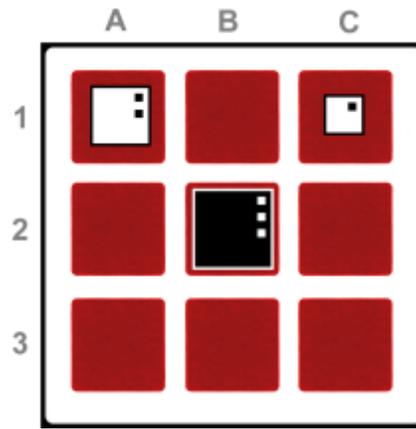
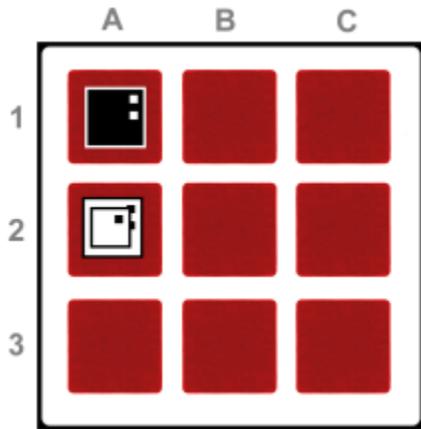
White's turn, if White places a 2 or 3 pip pyramid on C3, they will capture the black pyramid. If they place a pyramid on A3, only a 3 pip pyramid there will result in a capture. If a 1 pip pyramid is placed anywhere on the board, no capture can happen.



Here it is White's turn. If White places a 1, 2, or 3 pip piece at B2 or A3, they will capture both of Black's pieces.



In this example, it is Black's turn. Placing a 2 or 3 pip pyramid on A2 or B3 will result in capturing the 3 pip white piece.



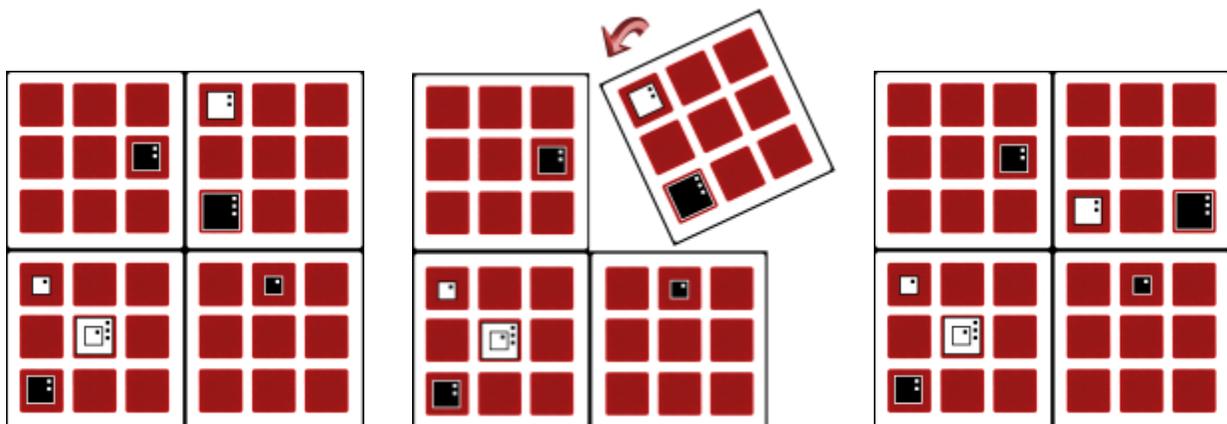
Black's turn: Playing a 1 pip pyramid on A3 will not result in any captures. However, placing a 2 or 3 pip pyramid on A3 will allow Black to capture the 1 pip white pyramid. The 2 pip white pyramid on A2 will stay there until Black plays another pyramid on A1 or A3.

If Black plays a 1 or 2 pip pyramid on B2 it will not be captured on Black's or White's turn. However, if White plays an additional piece on A1 or C1 the Black piece on B1 will be captured.

Coaster Rotation

On a player's turn, they may choose to rotate a single coaster instead of placing a pyramid. 90°, 180° or 270° rotations are allowed. To do this the player will remove a pyramid from their stash, placing it aside, they will not be able to play this pyramid later, but neither will their opponent get points for this pyramid at game end. A player may not rotate a coaster that was rotated on their opponent's previous turn.

The rotation of a coaster may cause a piece to become captured. In a case where both players might have a piece of theirs captured, the active player chooses which resolves first. This may remove the other possible capture situation from the board.

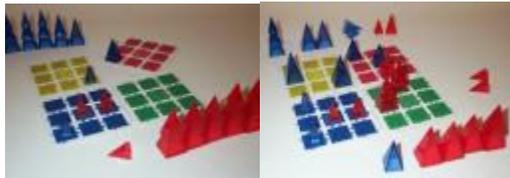


In the example above, Black would set a pyramid aside to rotate the coaster in the upper right corner 90° counterclockwise. Now White's 2 pip pyramid is captured.

Game End

The game ends when the second player plays their last pyramid (their 15th pyramid.) The winner is the player who has captured the most pips worth of pieces.

Version 0.6 of the rules are [available](#). This represents a simplification of the capture rules from previous versions.



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[Categories](#): [Games Under Development/Playtesting](#) | [Abstract](#) | [Capture](#) | [Stacking](#) | [Martian Coasters](#) | [2-player](#) | [2 stashes](#)

Atom Smasher

When particle physicists compete for grant money, they usually do it with proposals and plans. But this time around, a lunatic angel investor has asked you to prove yourself worthy of his full support by competing on a different level: the atomic level. He has gathered the world's most capable physicists to demonstrate their prowess with a particle accelerator, using it to carefully and precisely chisel off subatomic particles from a huge atom.

Overview

Players take turns flicking or sliding a small opaque pyramid (called the *smasher*) into a cluster of pyramids (called the *atom*). Each pyramid which is *smashed* a sufficient distance from the atom scores points equal to its pip count for the player.

Equipment

One Treehouse set or Icehouse stash (or more, for a truly massive atom to smash).

One token for each player, which can be a stone, poker chip, coin, or whatever is handy.

A relatively smooth playing surface, which may be of any shape or size.

Setup

Set aside the smasher, and then determine [who will go first](#) and the order of play.

Put one token for each player in an easily accessible location (called the *sink*).

Starting with the small pyramids (except for the smasher), give one to each player in reverse order of play. When the smalls run out, immediately switch to mediums, then to larges. This process should ensure that the first players to play have to place fewer and larger pyramids than those who must wait to play, which in turn tends to ensure that the more valuable large pyramids are closer to the center of the atom.

Atom Smasher

[David Artman](#)

A game of dexterity inspired by billiards, [carrom](#), and marbles

Players: 2–10

Icehouse stashes: One Treehouse set or Icehouse stash

Other equipment: One token per player, some form of relatively smooth playing surface

Setup time: 1–5 minutes

Playing time: 5–[30 minutes](#)

Rules complexity: Low

Strategy depth: Low

Random chance: Low

Mechanics: [Dexterity](#), turn-based

Theme: [Science](#)

BGG Link: not ready yet

Created in October, 2007

Building the Atom

Starting with the first player, each player places all of his or her pyramids onto the playing surface, [flat](#) or [upright](#). Every pyramid that is smaller than the player's largest pyramid must be placed so that at least one full edge of the pyramid completely touches one or more other pyramids; that pyramid is said to be *bonded* to the other pyramid(s). For example, if a player has only a medium and a large to place, he or she must make one edge of the medium completely touch the large, to bond to it; the large, however, need not be bonded to another pyramid.

The first player to place is encouraged—but not required—to place his or her pyramids in a position equidistant from every edge of the playing surface. Doing so maximizes the challenge of smashing, which extends the length of the game.

Smashing the Atom

On each player's turn, he or she attempts to separate pyramids from the atom by flicking or sliding the smasher into the atom. The player's wrist may not cross the edge of the playing surface, which means the smasher must be placed very near the edge of the surface, of course, before flicking or sliding it. Violation of this *wrist rule* causes a meltdown (see below).

A pyramid is *split* from the atom if the shooting player can, with one finger, completely circle the pyramid with the smasher in upright position without touching any pyramid on the playing surface. If the player touches any pyramid while trying to circle an allegedly separate pyramid—including the pyramid that he or she is trying to circle—then the player causes a meltdown (see below).

Do not remove and score any pyramids until every pyramid that the player wants to try to circle has been circled without a meltdown. The wrist rule does not apply when the player is trying to circle pyramids. Once the shooting player begins to remove and score successfully circled pyramids, he or she may not try to circle other pyramids later on that same turn.

Every circled pyramid is worth its pip count in points to the player who successfully circles it.

Meltdown

A *meltdown* occurs when a player violates the wrist rule or tries to circle an allegedly separate pyramid and touches another pyramid (separate or not). A meltdown must be called by another player, and there must be at least one other player who agrees. In a two-player game, be honest and be civil: generally, if a meltdown is called, take it like a stoic physicist should; there will be other grants!

A player that is guilty of a meltdown immediately ends his or her turn, without picking up any pyramids, be they successfully circled or not. The player must take a token from the sink; and on that player's next turn, he or she returns the token to the sink instead of smashing the atom.

It should be obvious that causing a meltdown is bad for the guilty player, as it results in the effective loss of two turns and (usually) leaves separated pyramids for the next player to try to claim. In general, a player *should not* try to circle an allegedly separate pyramid unless he or she is nearly guaranteed to avoid a meltdown.

Ending the Game

When all pyramids in the atom have been removed and scored, the player with the most points is the winner. It is traditional for the now-wealthy grant winner to buy a round of beverages for the other players, though all players should agree to this price of victory prior to play.

In the event of a points tie, the player with the most larges wins. Should that be tied, the player with the most mediums wins. Should that also be tied, the player with the large opaque wins, *regardless* of whether or not that player has the most points, most larges, or most mediums—the lunatic investor likes opacity more than bickering physicists.

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Categories: [Treehouse set](#) | [Dexterity](#) | [Science](#) | [N-player](#) | [2-player](#) | [3-player](#) | [4-player](#) | [5-player](#) | [6-player](#) | [7-player](#) | [8-player](#) | [9-player](#) | [10-player](#) | [Half hour](#)

Dog Eat Dog

An Icehouse game by Jason Darrah

Dog Eat Dog is an abstract game of strategy and luck for 2 or more players.

Setup

Each player takes 3 trees of any one color and randomly scatters the pieces on the playing surface, then sets them all upright. Each player rolls one six-sided die. Highest roll goes first.

Goal

The object of the game is to capture your opponents' pieces and have the highest score at the end of the game.

Play

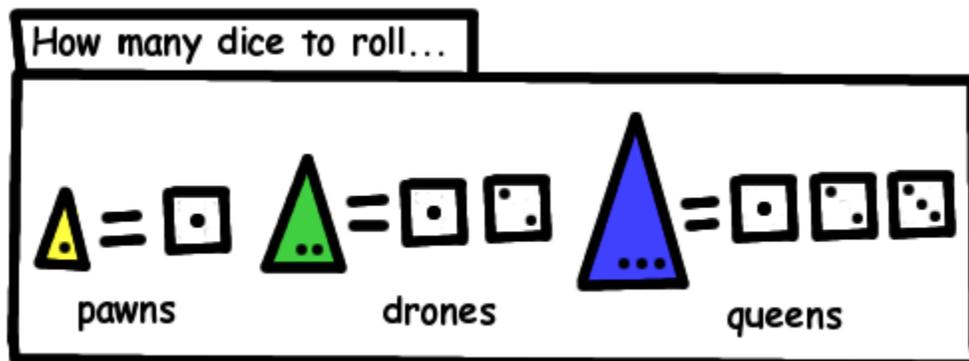
One turn is divided into two phases: 1. Cleanup and 2. Attacking.

Cleanup Phase

On your turn, set any of your tipped pyramids upright, if necessary.

Attack Phase

Next, you may make one attack. To attack, stack one of your pyramids on any pyramid of another color. You become the Attacker, and the player controlling the other pyramid becomes the Defender.



The Attacker and Defender each roll a number of six-sided dice equal to the pip count of their pyramid. Whoever has the highest single die roll wins! Compare the highest single die rolled by each player. Do not add the dice together!

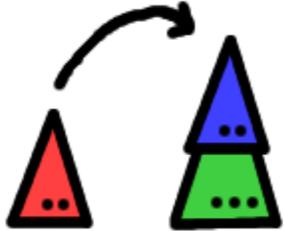
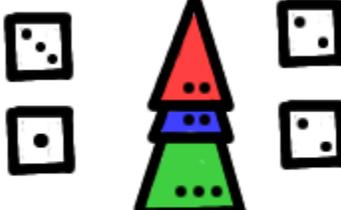
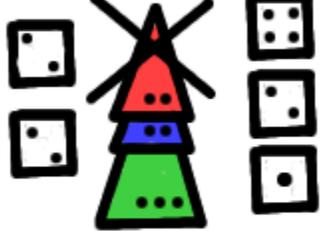
- If the Attacker wins, the attack was successful. The Attacker has captured that piece, and now controls that stack of pyramids. Leave the attacking piece on top of the captured Defending piece.
- If the Defender wins, the attack was not successful. Tip both pyramids over. They are effectively out of play until they are set upright at the beginning of that player's next turn.
- In the case of a tie, the player who controls the pyramid with the lowest pip count wins. If both the attacking and defending pyramids are the same size, the Defender wins.

Attacking...

 <p>attacker defender</p>	<p>Attacker rolls... Defender rolls...</p> 	<p>Attacker rolls... Defender rolls...</p> 	<p>Attacker rolls... Defender rolls...</p> 
<p>Pawn attacks a drone...</p>	<p>Attacker rolls 5, the defender rolls 4. The attack succeeds!</p>	<p>Attacker rolls 3, the defender rolls 6. The attack fails and both pyramids are tipped!</p>	<p>Attacker rolls 5, the defender rolls 5. The attacking pyramid is smaller than the defender, so the attack is successful!</p>

Attacking a Stack

Attacking a stack (cont.)

	<p>Attacker rolls... Defender rolls...</p> 	<p>Attacker rolls... Defender rolls...</p> 
<p>Drone attacks a stack</p>	<p>Attacker rolls 3, the first defender rolls 2. Move on to the next defender!</p>	<p>Attacker rolls 2, defender rolls 4. Green player takes the red piece!</p>

You may attempt to attack a stack of pyramids that another player controls, as long as you have no pyramids of your color in that stack. This works just like attacking a single pyramid, except that you must defend against every pyramid in the stack.

Make your attack roll as normal, with the topmost pyramid in the stack being the Defender. If the Attacker wins, the next pyramid in the stack becomes the Defender, and so on, until either the Attacker controls the stack, or the Attacker is beaten by one of the Defenders. Do not re-roll your attack. Use the same attack roll for every pyramid in the stack.

If any of the Defenders beats the Attacker, do not tip the stack, as in an attack against a single pyramid. Instead, the player whose Defending pyramid beat the Attacker's pyramid captures that pyramid and will add it to their score at the end of the game. Set captured pyramids in front of the player that captured them, away from the other pieces. Ending the Game

Play continues until any player can no longer make any moves on their turn. Proceed to Scoring.

The Treehouse Die (Optional)

An optional rule for those who like more randomness in their Icehouse games, or those who just really dig the Treehouse die...

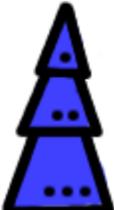
On your turn, during an attack, you may give up rolling one of your six-sided dice to roll the Treehouse die in its place. You must still roll at least one six-sided die, so you may only use this option when attacking with a 2 or 3 point pyramid.

After rolling the Treehouse die and resolving your attack, you may take the action indicated on the Treehouse die (unless your roll TIP or HOP - those actions take effect immediately as part of the attack roll). If you cannot or do not wish to take the action indicated on the Treehouse die, it has no effect.

The Treehouse die actions are as follows: TIP - This attack automatically fails. HOP - This attack automatically succeeds. SWAP - You may Swap the top pyramid of any 2 stacks. DIG - You may "dig" any of your pyramids to the top of the stack it is in. AIM - You may tip over or set upright any single pyramid not in a stack. WILD - You may make another attack this turn!

Scoring

Once any player can no longer make any moves on their turn, the game ends. Players take every stack of pyramids that they control, discard their pyramids, and try to arrange their opponents' captured pieces into trees. Scoring is similar to Volcano. Solid color trees are worth 7 points each. Mixed color trees are worth 5 points each. Single pyramids are worth 1 point each.

Scoring		
7 points	5 points	1 point each
 <p>solid color tree</p>	 <p>mixed color tree</p>	 <p>single pyramids</p>

Again, do NOT count your own pyramids when tallying your score.

Logger

Background

Four rival lumberjacks are competing to chop down the most trees for their business. However, standing in their way are tree-hugging hippies protesting the deforestation.

Glossary

The following terms are used in Logger:

Tree - Any seedling, sapling or mature tree on the board.

Seedling - A large pyramid

Sapling - A large pyramid with a medium pyramid stacked on it

Mature Tree - A stack of pyramids. From top to bottom: small, medium, large.

Protester - Denoted by a volcano cap

Logger - A piece representing the player. Denoted by a medium pyramid of a color not used for trees. Non-Icehouse pieces like meeples may be also used.

Setup

Place a seedling on the center of the board. The remaining pyramid pieces from the Rainbow stash are kept aside in a common pool. Starting with the first player, each player places his logger on a corner of the board. Each player also starts with 1 protester in his or her supply (2 protesters for a 2-player game). Remember who went first as this will be important at the end game.

Goal

The winner is the player with the most points at the end of the game. Though scoring 10 points triggers the end game, having 10 points may not be enough for victory.

Logger

Designed by [Erik Dresner](#)

A lumberjack-themed game for 2-4 players

Players: 2-4

Icehouse stashes: 5 Rainbow, 1 Xeno (or vice versa)

Other [Volcano caps](#),
equipment: 5x5 board

Setup time: 2 minutes

Playing time: [20 plus minutes](#)

Rules complexity: Medium

Strategy depth: Medium

Random chance: None

Mechanics: Board

Theme: Lumberjacks

BGG Link: pending

Gameplay

No Diagonals - Diagonals do not exist in Logger. Any rule pertaining to adjacency or movement is orthogonal only.

Each player's turn consists of three parts: **Movement**, **Growth** and **Action**.

Movement - Move your logger up to two spaces. Loggers may not occupy or walk through spaces occupied by trees or other loggers.

Growth - All trees in the same row and column your logger occupies grow 1 stage. All seedlings become saplings and all saplings become mature trees. Mature trees produce 1 sapling in any space adjacent to them if able. Please note growth of all trees is considered simultaneous, so no tree should experience two stages of growth in one turn, nor should any seedlings newly spawned from a mature tree this turn. All trees in your logger's row and column must grow or create a new seedling if able.

Action - There are three options in the Action phase: *Plant*, *Protest* and *Chop*. You must perform an action if able. This phase is skipped if your logger is unable to perform any action.

Plant - Plant one seedling in any space adjacent to your logger.

Protest - You may place one or more protesters from your supply onto mature trees. Protested trees may not be directly chopped down by any player.

Chop - Chop down an unprotected mature tree adjacent to your logger by removing it from the board. Chopping will create a domino effect. Any mature tree behind the first chopped tree will also be considered chopped and so on regardless if they have protesters on them not. This process stops when either the edge of the board or a space occupied by anything other than a mature tree is reached. Score 1 point for each tree removed in this way. Add any protesters from felled trees to your supply.

For example, a given row can have this formation: Player-Mature Tree-Mature Tree-Sapling-Mature Tree. When the player chops the first tree, the second one will be removed as well. However, the domino effect ends at the sapling because it is not fully mature. The sapling and the last mature tree remain on the board.

End Game

Logger is a game of equal turns. When a player reaches 10 points, the end game condition is reached. All players who have not had a turn this round will get one final turn. (Example: Player 2 reaches 10 points. Players 3 and 4 will receive one additional turn, but Player 1 does not. However, if Player 4 reaches 10 points, the game ends immediately.)

The player with the most points at the end of the game wins. In case of a tie, the player with more protesters in reserve wins.

Retrieved from "<http://icehousegames.org/wiki/index.php?title=Logger>"

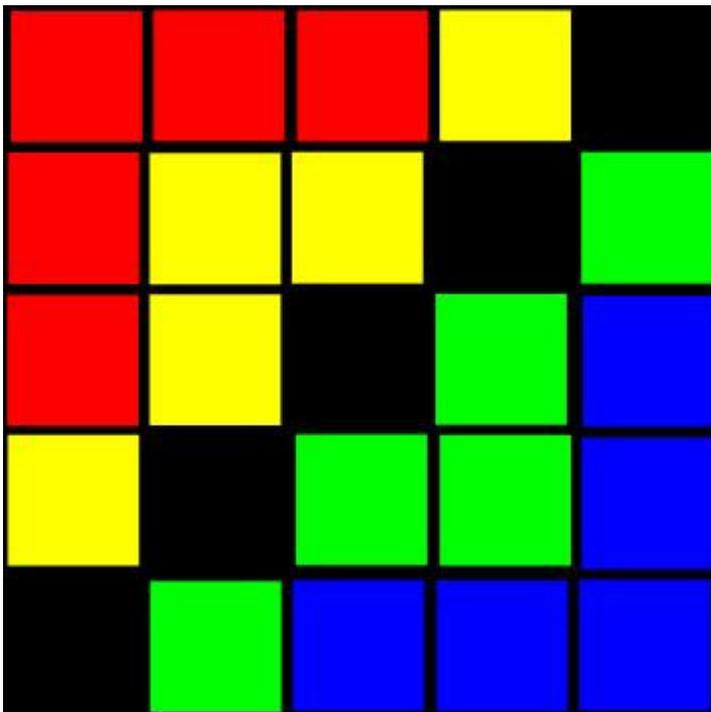
Categories: [6 stashes](#) | [2-player](#) | [3-player](#) | [4-player](#) | [Half hour](#)

Martian BattleSpires

In one of the stratospheric mountain ranges of Mars a battle rages between warring clans of Rock Monsters. Their clashing battle sounds can be heard from miles away as they leap amongst the Spires to gain advantage and drop onto their enemies like pyramidal boulders hurled from God. There are only two questions that remain: Who will prevail, and will the beautiful landscape survive the battles?

Setup

Each player selects a color. Arrange all pyramids into monochrome trees. Assuming that the players are Blue and Red, arrange the trees into a volcano style setup like this:



Object

To win! See "Winning" below.

Martian BattleSpires

[GameBrain42](#)

Martian BattleSpires is a game of domination by advantage.

Players: 2

Icehouse stashes: 5 [Treehouse](#) sets

Other equipment: A [volcano board](#) would be handy but not required.

Setup time: about 2 to 3 minutes

Playing time: ???

Rules complexity: Medium

Strategy depth: High

Random chance: None

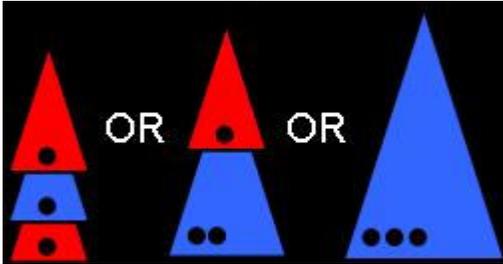
Mechanics: Stacking/capturing

Theme: ???

BGG Link: {{{BGG_Link}}}

Some Special Game Concepts and Terminology

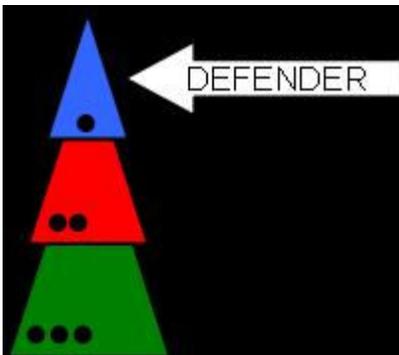
- **Piece:** A single pyramid or combination of pyramids with a pip value of no more than 3. A piece may contain your opponent's pyramids.



- **Attacker:** This is a piece that moves onto the space occupied by a defender. Attackers can consist of any pyramids equal to 3 pips in value. This could be:

one large
one medium and one small
up to 3 smalls.

- **Defender:** This is ALWAYS a single pyramid receiving an attack. The Spires, even though they can be captured during a Breakthrough, are not considered Defenders.



- **Spires** These are all the trees that do not belong to either player.
- **Power:** This represents the capturing ability of the piece making an attack. The power of a piece is equal to its total pip value.



- **Breakthrough:** When a capturing piece's power exceeds the value of the defender being captured **and** the attacker has advantage then the defender is captured and breakthrough occurs. The power of the attacking piece is reduced by the value of the defender. If there is enough power remaining, then the piece below the target piece will be captured as well. This is the case even if the piece below the target is either your own piece or a piece of one of the neutral colors.
- **Advantage:** An attacker must have a higher advantage than a defending piece in order to capture it. Use the actual height of the total stack (including the piece you intend to use). If the total stack of the attacker is taller than the defender's stack, then the attacker has advantage. Any stack higher than another is said to have advantage over any lower stack.
- **Spire Altitude Limit:** No Spire may have more than 13 pyramids in it including the original neutral spire. This reduces the possibility of a Spire Catastrophe.
- **Spire Catastrophe:** This is what you call it when a Spire is toppled. If this happens, try to reconstruct it as best you can. If no one can remember (or can't agree on) how it was arranged, then simply remove it from play entirely. If the spire was Crashed (someone knocked it over) then assess that player a -5 point penalty. If the Spire just toppled on it's own, then no one should be penalized.

Game Play

- **Decide who goes first:** The tallest player goes first (or optionally, have a tree-climbing contest. Whoever gets the highest can go first!)
- **Movement:** Each player has 3 movement points to spend on moving 3 pips worth of pyramids. A player need not use all of his/her movement points but, a player **must** move at least one pyramid if there is a move available. Each piece may only move one space and the bottom pyramid of the piece must be your color. Moves can be made orthogonally or diagonally. A piece can move onto any spire.

Movement Costs: A piece must factor all the pips within it, even from opposing pyramids, into its movement cost (i.e. if you move your small blue pyramid with a small red on top, it still costs you 2 of your movement points to move). Additionally, all pyramids in a piece contribute to the power of that piece.

Along for the Ride: Only the bottom pyramid in a piece is considered to have been moved. The others are just along for the ride. If there are still movement points left, a pyramid along for the ride can also make a move.

Empty Spaces: Empty spaces are off limits for play.

Imprisoned: If you cannot move any pieces during your turn, you are considered to be "Imprisoned" and the game immediately ends. See "winning" for how to determine the winner...

- **Attacking:** In order for a piece to successfully attack and capture another piece, the attacking piece must have a higher advantage than the defender, and the attacking piece's

power must equal or exceed that of the defending piece. **Both** of these conditions *must* be met for the move to be considered an attack.

Winning

Before the Game starts choose one of the following methods to determine the winner.

- **Genocide:** This method awards the game only to the player who deals complete destruction to his foe by capturing all 15 of his pyramids.
- **Points:** In this method you rack up points for each pyramid captured (Including the neutral ones.) Each of your opponent's pyramids is worth its pip value in points. If you capture neutral pyramids, they are worth their pip value +1. If you capture your own pyramid(s) they are worth 0 points. The first player to collect 20 pips worth of pyramids wins!

Winning by Imprisonment: If the game is forced to end because of imprisonment, use the following method to determine the winner regardless of the the winning condition chosen at the beginning of the game. Each player should tally up all their captured pyramids. The player causing the imprisonment gets a bonus 5 points. Whoever has the highest total wins. **Remember:** The point value of a captured Spire piece is It's Pip count + 1.

Strategy

Keep the smalls free: In my opinion, the small pieces are the most powerful in Martian BattleSpires. They are a major tactical asset for a number of reasons.

- #1. They are the cheapest pieces to move.
- #2. They have the greatest range given the fact that they can be carried to an advantageous position and still be able to move
- #3. They achieve the same height as a larger piece with less cost(see #1).
- #4. They are the hardest pieces to imprison.

Retrieved from "http://icehousegames.org/wiki/index.php?title=Martian_BattleSpires"

Category: [Games Under Development/Playtesting](#)

Pass The Pyramids

Overview

Players win or lose tokens on the toss of their pyramids, scoring points based on how they land. The winner is the player with the most tokens when one player busts.

Setup

Each player begins with 6 tokens and a set of pyramids (one small, one medium, one large).

Throwing

From a minimum of 3 inches above the playing surface, a player must hold the set of 3 pyramids in a face up, open palm. The pyramids must not be touching at the start of the throw. The throw should be a single, smooth movement. The palm must be face down at some point during the throw.

Gameplay

The first player stakes one token for the right to throw up to three times. After each throw, the points total of the current throw is calculated, and the player may keep the score or (if they have not yet thrown 3 times) discard the score and throw again. If after 3 throws the score is zero, the player loses his stake to the pot.

If the score is above zero, the next player (clockwise) may pass or stake. A player may not pass if there are zero or one tokens in the pot.

If a player stakes, he has up to 3 throws to beat the current score. A throw which ties or beats the current score on the first or second throw *need not* be kept if the player wishes to try for a higher score.

If the current score is beaten, the throwing player collects the previous stake and the pot, and reclaims his own stake. After a pot is won, the next player clockwise from the winner stakes to begin a new round.

If the score is tied, the tying player takes control of the previous stake ("adds it to his own"), and the next player clockwise may stake or pass.

Pass The Pyramids

Designed by [Avri Klemer](#)

A "Dicehouse" game for 3 to 5 players.

Players: 3 to 5

Icehouse stashes: 1 [Treehouse](#) Set

Other equipment: 18 to 30 tokens

Setup time: 2 minutes

Playing time: [20 plus minutes](#)

Rules complexity: Low

Strategy depth: Some

Random chance: High

Mechanics: "Dice"

Theme: Push-Your-Luck

BGG Link:

If the score is not beaten or tied, the stake is added to the pot, and the next player may stake or pass. If the play returns to the currently scoring player without being beaten or tied, he collects the pot, reclaims his stake, and the next player clockwise stakes to begin a new round.

If two or more players have the same number of tokens when one player busts (loses his last token), the game continues until there is a single player with the most tokens.

Scoring

A pyramid scores a) if it is upright and/or b) if it points at another pyramid.

If no pyramid is upright or pointed at another pyramid, the throw scores zero.

[Note a "weird" pyramid automatically score zero for the throw.]

An upright pyramid scores the square of it's pip count.

A pyramid pointing at another scores the total of *both* pyramids' values based on their current orientation.

Some examples:

a 1-pointer pointing at a 3-pointer scores $1 + 3 = 4$ points.

a 2-pointer pointing at a 1 pointer which is pointing back at the 2-pointer scores $2 + 1 + 1 + 2 = 6$ points.

a 3 pointer pointing at an upright 2-pointer scores $3 + 4 = 7$ points.

an upright 3-pointer scores 9 points.

an upright 1-pointer underneath an upright 2-pointer scores $1 + 4 + 1 + 4 = 10$ (1 for the upright 1, 4 for the upright 2, $1 + 4$ for the 1 pointing at the 2)

License



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Retrieved from "http://icehousegames.org/wiki/index.php?title=Pass_The_Pyramids"

[Categories:](#) [Treehouse set](#) | [Single stash](#) | [Abstract](#) | [Half hour](#)

T-Minus

Premise

In T-Minus, you control one or more three-stage rockets. Your goal: to land an Unarmed Personnel Capsule on the moon.

The main tradeoff in this game is speed versus safety; a rocket can take up to six actions per turn, but each action is more dangerous than the last.

Setup

Each player takes nine pyramids of any one color:

- 3 (large) Primary Fuel Tanks,
- 3 (medium) Secondary Fuel Tanks, and
- 3 (small) Unarmed Personnel Capsules.

Decide by mutual consent which player will go first, and in what order players will take their turns, except that any actual astronauts or cosmonauts should go last, to counteract the advantage conferred by their superior expertise.

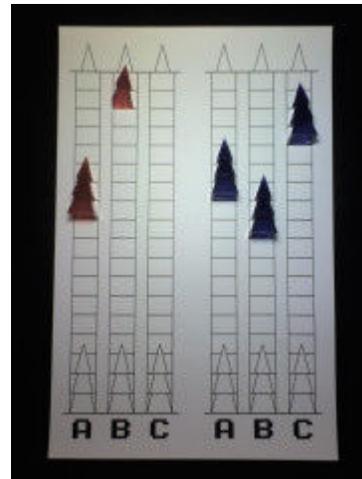
"Risk" defined

Whenever these rules say to "risk" a rocket, you roll one die and compare the result with the number of risk tokens that rocket has.

- If the number of risk tokens equals or exceeds the number rolled, the rocket is destroyed; take back its parts and tokens. All players should bow their heads in a moment of silence for the crew.
- If the number rolled exceeds the number of risk tokens, the rocket survives. **Add one risk token to the rocket!**
 - If the rocket had no risk tokens to begin with, you can skip the die roll and just add the token.

T-Minus

Daniel Cristofani



It's Not Rocket Science.

Players: 2-6 or so

Icehouse stashes: 1 per player, or 3 [Treehouse](#) sets

Other equipment: three 6-sided dice, 12 to 18 risk tokens (e.g. pennies), game board

Setup time: 15 seconds?

Playing time: 5-10 minutes

Rules complexity: Low

Strategy depth: Low

Random chance: High

Mechanics: Board, [Dice](#)

Theme: Low :)

BGG Link: {{{BGG_Link}}}

Turn structure

Generally, when it is your turn you may attempt any one of the four following actions, and unless the action was "pass", **it will still be your turn afterward**—you decide how far to push your luck.

However, if your last rocket has just been destroyed, you **must** pass. You can build more rockets next turn.

Actions

You may **BUILD** a new rocket.

- You cannot build if you already have three rockets in play.
- You must risk any rockets you already have—see above.
- If you have two rockets, you must risk both of them separately.
- **If no rockets were destroyed**, assemble a tree in your color—small on medium on large.
 - Place it on its side in the starting position on the board.
 - Give the new rocket one risk token.

You may **FIRE** one of your rockets.

- First, risk that rocket.
- If it's not destroyed, note the rocket's current size, then get a number:
 - Three-stage rocket: Roll two dice and use the maximum (largest) of the two values.
 - Two-stage rocket: Roll three dice and use the median (middle) of the three values. (If two dice match, use that value.)
 - One-stage rocket: Roll no dice. Use the value 1.
- Now move the rocket forward that number of spaces.
 - If this brings **even the tip** of a Fuel Tank across the goal line, your rocket has crashed.
 - Take its parts and tokens.
 - All players should bow their heads in a moment of silence for the crew.
 - If the move brings the whole Personnel Capsule past the goal line and both Fuel Tanks have already been separated, **you have won the game!**
 - Declare victory and celebrate as desired, then clear the board.

You may **SEPARATE** a Fuel Tank from one of your rockets.

- First, risk that rocket.
- If it's not destroyed, remove its largest remaining Fuel Tank, leaving the other stage(s) in place. Sound effects are optional.

You may **PASS**.

- **Remove all risk tokens** from your rockets, leaving them within reach of other players.

- Give the dice to the next player. It becomes that player's turn.

The Board

There are several options here. The main requisite is that the board should have nineteen parallel lines, spaced roughly 3/4" apart. When a rocket is first built, the base of its Primary Fuel Tank is aligned with line 1 and the base of its Unarmed Personnel Capsule is aligned with line 3. You win by aligning the base of your Personnel Capsule with line 19 after separating both Fuel Tanks—i.e. you must move one rocket forward a total of 16 spaces, and it must have done two "separation" actions before the final "firing" action.

A standard go board works fine for two or three players. So would a big sheet of paper with parallel lines drawn on it. If you want something more specialized, you can print [this file](#) on 11x17 paper or card stock, portrait mode, with half-inch margins added all around (or enlarge it to that size with a copier). You'll need one copy of this board for every two players.

Communications

Before rolling the dice, a player must specify what action is being attempted, and with which rocket. It is courteous to announce risk levels and outcomes as well. Here's a sample turn:

- "Build A, risk 0." (*Places rocket A and token.*)
- "Build B; A risk 1" (*rolls a 5, places another token by A*), "okay, B risk 0." (*Places rocket B and token.*)
- "Build C; A risk 2" (*rolls a 2*), "destroyed" (*removes rocket A and its tokens; pause*); "B risk 1" (*rolls a 3, places 2nd token by B*), "okay."
- "Build A; B risk 2" (*rolls a 3, places token by B*), "okay, A risk 0." (*Places rocket A and token.*)
- "Fire A, risk 1" (*rolls a 6, places token by A*), "okay." (*Rolls two dice, 3 and 4. Moves rocket A 4 spaces forward.*) "Four."
- "Fire A, risk 2" (*rolls a 3, places token by A*), "okay." (*Rolls two dice, 2 and 6. Moves rocket A 6 spaces forward.*) "Six."
- "Separate A, risk 3" (*rolls a 4, places token by A.*), "okay." (*Removes biggest pyramid from A.*)
- "Fire A, risk 4" (*this is really chancy. Rolls a 6, though, and places token by A*), "okay." (*Rolls three dice: 3, 5, and 5. Moves rocket B 5 spaces forward.*) "Five."
- "Fire B, risk 3" (*rolls a 1*), "destroyed." (*Removes rocket B and its tokens; pause.*)
- "Pass." (*Removes all five tokens from A, passes dice.*)

Of course, you could also role-play Mission Control elaborately, if your group wanted to and didn't mind lengthening what is essentially a luck-based filler game.

Probabilities

For convenience, here is how far a rocket is likely to move when fired:

	1	2	3	4	5	6
3-stage	3%	8%	14%	19%	25%	31%
2-stage	7%	19%	24%	24%	19%	7%
1-stage	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Notes

-First-player advantage is considerable. I haven't decided whether or how to compensate for it. Maybe the first player should get an immediate jump to risk level 2?

-I have been thinking about a marginally more strategic variant, in which each player gets a limited number of risk tokens, which are lost when used, but replenished after each turn based on the number of active rockets the player has.

-Thanks to Matt, AJ, Angela, Rachel, and Erika for playtesting, suggestions, and general encouragement. And thanks in advance to anyone who gives feedback via the Net.

Retrieved from "<http://icehousegames.org/wiki/index.php?title=T-Minus>"

Categories: [Games Under Development/Playtesting](#) | [2-player](#) | [3-player](#) | [3HOUSE](#) | [4-player](#) | [5-player](#) | [6-player](#) | [Custom board](#) | [Dice](#) | [Minutes](#) | [N-player](#) | [One stash per player](#) | [Press Your Luck](#) | [Race](#) | [Satirical](#) | [Space](#)

Tresurion

The **Tresurion** Sector in the Bantrax Galaxy is a hot bed of conflict. This area of open space does not fall under the jurisdiction of any government. It is truly free space. Many factions are fighting for control of this sector. Recent scientific surveys have found that the Tresurion Sector is rich in Chlolynium crystals. The heart and soul of the Aronium drive system that is the source of power for virtually all starships and power plants in the known universe. It is said that this sector is the source of an incredibly pure version of this rare crystal. So pure that it is theorized the power that can be culled from these particular crystals is more than ten times the normal amount. Something worthy of fighting over. Ice House Space Battles pits two opposing forces against each other that are vying for control of this sector.

The object is simple. Eradicate the opposing force to gain control of the Tresurion Sector.

The following are rules for the basic game. Future scenarios may vary aspects of this (such as initial setup, new ship classes, "terrain" such as asteroids, wormholes, etc...).

Equipment

- 2 Icehouse packs. Preferably of two different color sets. If not then have some way to distinguish between each player's pieces (volcano caps, stickers, washers over top of Icehouse piece)
- 1 Twenty sided die
- 1 Ten sided die
- 1 Playmat that is divided into 1" x 1" squares. This mat should have at least 15 x 25 quadrants. Chessex playmats work, but it is just as easy to purchase a poster board from an office supply store that is already marked off. A pack of three should cost around \$5 or a thicker foam board can be purchased for the same amount. This is handy to have around for other Icehouse games or other gaming needs. See attached pictures in appendix.

Fleet Construction

Each player constructs a fleet from an entire Icehouse pack. These fifteen pieces can be combined to make a wide range of different starships. Each has its own unique abilities. Depending on the combinations a fleet may be comprised of five to fifteen different vessels. Record your ships on the Fleet Record Sheet. The ship list details the different types of vessels that are available in Icehouse Space Battles. It lists the Shield Strength/Toughness, Class of Ship,

Tresurion

Patrick Cowden

An Icehouse space battles system

Players: 2

Icehouse stashes: 2 (1 per player)

Other equipment: 1d20, 1d10,
15x25 (or larger)
board

Setup time: ???

Playing time: ???

Rules complexity: ???

Strategy depth: ???

Random chance: ???

Mechanics: ???

Theme: space battle

BGG Link: N/A

Movement Rate (MR), Fire Power, range of attack, and Universal Construction Number (UCN). See designer notes on UCN numbers. It is up to the player to determine what combination works best for him. Does a swarming of smaller, faster ships get the job done (like the rebel alliance against the Death Star)? Or is a smaller fleet of huge lumbering vessels with big firepower more appropriate? Whatever your style you decide.

Setup

Place each fleet at opposite ends of the playmat. The ships must be in the first two rows of that end. The ships may be in any order as long as they are in the first two rows. Only one ship may occupy a quadrant at any given time.

Turn Sequence

Each turn is composed of two rounds. Player one's round and Player two's round. An initiative roll is made at the beginning of each turn. The sequence is as follows:

- Initiative
- Player One
 - move phase
 - attack phase
 - damage allocation phase
- Player Two
 - move phase
 - attack phase
 - damage allocation phase

Move Phase

each ship may move up to its full movement rate (MR). It may pass through a quadrant that contains a friendly vessel. It may not end its turn in that sector though. A ship may not pass through a quadrant that is occupied by an enemy ship.

Attack Phase

once a ship has ended its movement phase it may target an enemy ship. There must be a clear line of sight for the targeting system to lock onto its victim. The attacking vessel must also be within its attack range. A zero range indicates that the attacking vessel must be in an adjacent quadrant in order for its weapons to hit. A Light Frigate with a range of 1 can fire up to one quadrant away from its intended victim.

The attacking vessel rolls 1d20 and subtracts the MR of the targeted ship. The adjusted result must be greater than or equal to 10 to score a hit. A scout ship is small, nimble, and quick. Thusly, it is harder to hit because 9 points are subtracted from the attacker's die roll. The Dreadnaught fills the heavens with its bulk. This lumbering brute is an easy target. The ship attacking this vessel only has to subtract 1 from its attack die roll. Multiple ships may

concentrate their fire upon one ship. In this case each ship must make its own separate attack die roll.

A ship may only fire once per turn and can only target one ship.

A natural 1 rolled on an attack roll is an automatic miss regardless of any bonuses. A natural 20, in the same respect is an automatic hit.

Damage Allocation Phase

Once a hit has occurred damage must be determined. Each class of ship has differing amounts of damage it can dish out. This is determined by how effeciently the vessel is able to extract power from the Chlolynium crystal. A base amount of energy (1d10) can be extracted from a crystal to power the weapons system. The larger class starships have the space to house larger extracting units resulting in increased power being allocated to the destruction of its foe. This is culminated in the Dreadnaught class which has a damage potential of 7-16 points (1d10+6).

If multiple ships have targeted the same vessel, these damage results are combined into one number.

Damage is reduced by the amount of the damaged vessel's shield rating. An Alpha Class Frigate's shield can absorb 6 points of damage each round. Any amounts of damage above this slips through the shielding system and rends the starship apart.

The shield rating is also the amount of damage that the vessel can take before being completely destroyed. Though the Dreadnaught is like a sitting duck, it takes a lot of damage in a round to take her down. Conversely, just about any hit on a Scout ship will rip it apart. The trick is hitting it in the first place. A record of the amount of damage a ship has taken is kept on the Fleet Record Sheet. Once a starship has taken its full amount of damage it is destroyed and immediately removed from play.

Ship Classifications

Name	Shield	MR	Fire Power	Range	UCN
Scout	1	9	1d10	0	001
Corvette	2	8	1d10	0	002
Star Fighter	3	7	1d10	0	003
Light Frigate	2	8	1d10+1	1	011
Banshee Frigate	3	7	1d10+1	1	012
Rho Class A Frigate	4	6	1d10+1	1	013
Rho Class B Frigate	4	6	1d10+2	2	022
Theta Class Frigate	5	5	1d10+2	2	023
Alpha Class Frigate	6	4	1d10+3	3	033
Light Cruiser	3	7	1d10+2	2	111
Chimera Class A Cruiser	4	6	1d10+2	2	112
Chimera Class B Cruiser	5	5	1d10+2	2	113
Cruiser	5	5	1d10+3	3	122
Battle Cruiser	6	4	1d10+3	3	123
Star Cruiser	7	3	1d10+4	4	133
Light Battleship	6	4	1d10+4	4	222
Battleship	7	3	1d10+4	4	223
Heavy Battleship	8	2	1d10+5	5	233
Dreadnought	9	1	1d10+6	6	333

Scenarios and Designer Notes

Scenario teasers and designer notes are available in the .pdf download of the rules from [the author's website](#)

Virus Fight

Each player owns 4 types of "computer instructions" and builds a small program which then runs around the board (computer memory) changing itself and trying to destroy the opposing programs.

Each player uses a Treehouse set to represent the instructions, so for each player, the same instruction may use a different color, as the game can be played with mixed types of TH sets.

There's a special piece (represented by a small opaque or a hollow plastic pawn) that acts as the program counter, or instruction marker. This piece is placed on top of the instruction that will be executed next. If a player cannot move this piece then that player is eliminated.

Material Needed

You will need one Treehouse set (of any type) per player. These will be the computer instructions. You'll also need one hollow token in a unique color for each player.

In a two player game, one of those tokens may be the small opaque. If each player uses a different type of Treehouse set, then you can use the two small opaques (black and white).

With more players, it's possible to use small hollow plastic pawns (these seem to be quite common) in addition to the opaque pieces. If all the Treehouse sets used for Computer Instructions are of the same type, you can use the small pieces from a different Treehouse set too. Also, if available, one player can always use a Volcano Cap (or grey small).

For two players, use a 5x5 (Volcano) board. The board should be different (and bigger) with more players. There should be at least as many spaces on the board as the number of pieces used by all the players, so for a 3 player game, a 6x6 board would be best.

Also, each player should set up their pieces as far as possible from the other player's pieces, using the side spaces on the board.

Virus Fight

Jorge Arroyo



A game of combat between two ever changing computer programs

Players: 2-5

Icehouse stashes: 1 Treehouse set per player (of any type)

Other equipment: 5x5 or 6x6 Board, optional play-aids and hollow pawns/volcano caps/TH set of different type (as long as all the others are equal).

Setup time: 1 minute

Playing time: 10-30 minutes

Rules complexity: Medium

Strategy depth: Medium

Random chance: Small

Mechanics:

Theme: Programming

BGG Link: [Virus Fight](#)

I've made three pdf files for this game. One is a 5x5 board with play-aids (<http://george.makasoft.net/icehouse/VirusFight-Board.pdf>) and the others are just the play-aids in color (<http://george.makasoft.net/icehouse/VirusFight-PlayAids.pdf>) and in B/W with the color names (<http://george.makasoft.net/icehouse/VirusFight-BWPlayaids.pdf>) for those that already have a suitable board, or to play with a bigger board.

Setup

Place a the board between the players. Each player takes one of the TreeHouse sets and places all the translucent pieces, ordered by color, standing up, in front of them outside the board. They represent the instructions. Then each player chooses one of the unique hollow tokens to be their instruction marker.

Color Meanings and Definitions



Three blocks: A two instruction block, a three instruction block and a one instruction block. All these blocks are Empty Blocks.



One block. It's both the active block for the black player and for the grey player.



Three blocks: An empty block with one instruction, the active block for the black player and the active block for the grey player. Both have 3 instructions.

In the game, each translucent color represents a different type of computer instruction:

- YELLOW / ORANGE = MOVE
- GREEN / CYAN = WRITE
- BLUE / PURPLE = JUMP
- RED / CLEAR = ERASE

The actions a player might take when running one of those instructions will be explained later.

The size of the instruction represents the preference of the instruction. Bigger instructions are run first.

The "INSTRUCTION MARKER" as mentioned above is represented by a small pyramid of a color not used for the instructions or another hollow token. It is placed over one of the pieces on the board and the instruction below it is the one that will be executed next for that player.

A "BLOCK OF INSTRUCTIONS" or "PROGRAM" is any number of pyramids grouped together on the board (and separated from the rest of the pieces). Two instructions belong to the same block if it's possible to make a path from one to the other, only with orthogonal steps, that only passes through spaces occupied by other instructions. This way, two pieces that are adjacent to each other diagonally do not form a block.

The "ACTIVE BLOCK" is the block in which the player's instruction marker is currently on. Note that it is perfectly possible for a block to be the active block for two or more players. In this case, all the players sharing it, act on their turn as if it was just theirs, being able to affect it freely. (Hey, this is a game about computer viruses after all!!)

An "EMPTY BLOCK" is a block of instructions that doesn't have an instruction marker from any player.

Program Setup

During the first phase of the game, the players build their initial programs in secret. They can use up to 5 instructions (of any color or size and in any order) forming a line, to do it. Then they place their Instruction Marker on top of any instruction in their program. When all the players are done, they reveal their programs and place them on the board, on the row (from their point of view) closest to them. The program instructions must be placed together, with no spaces between any two pieces, forming one block. No two programs (from different players) may touch each other at this point.

Game Play

The player with the smallest program goes first. In case of a tie, the one with less total of pips from their program's pieces starts, if there's still a tie, the player with the biggest piece under their instruction marker starts. If there's yet another tie, decide randomly.

The game is played in rounds of as many turns as players playing (one for each player). After the first round, the first player for the next round may change.

After the first round, before a new round starts, look at the instruction each player is about to execute. If the current first player has the biggest piece (even if tied with other players) then the first player remains the same next round. If only one of the instructions is the biggest, then the player owning that instruction will become the first player for this round. In case of a tie not involving the first player, the player closest to the first player (in clockwise direction) becomes the first player.

Using a stack made from the left over opaque pyramids, you can mark who's the first player for the current round.

During their turn, a player has to execute the instruction their marker is standing on. Here's what the player can do for each type of instruction. Note that any piece that has an instruction marker on top, cannot be affected in any way by any instruction executed:

- **MOVE (YELLOW / ORANGE)** - The player must take one of the instructions from his active block and move it to any other empty space adjacent orthogonally to an instruction from the same block. This way, blocks can be divided or merged (even with active blocks from other players).
- **WRITE (GREEN / CYAN)** - The player must take any one of his spare instructions (the ones in their play area outside the board) and place it on an empty space adjacent to an instruction from his active block. This way, blocks may also be merged (even with active blocks from other players).
- **JUMP (BLUE / PURPLE)** - The player must move his instruction marker to any other piece on his active block or to any empty block.
- **ERASE (RED / CLEAR)** - The player can destroy an instruction if it is adjacent orthogonally to any ERASE instruction in the active block. An erased piece is "captured" by the player and they just place it back on their play area outside the board to be used again at a later time. Note that as long as there's one empty space adjacent to one of the ERASE pieces, the player can choose to target it and not actually erase any piece, but if all the ERASE pieces from the active block are surrounded by other pieces (friendly or not) the player must target an actual piece.

After executing the instruction, unless it was a JUMP instruction, the active player must move his instruction marker to an orthogonally adjacent instruction that doesn't have another instruction marker on top. The marker has to be moved, otherwise the active player is eliminated from the game.

When this is done, play passes to the player to the left (clockwise). When all the players have taken their turn, after checking for a possible first player change, a new round starts.

Ending the Game

If a player cannot move their instruction marker to a new instruction at the end of their turn, then they are eliminated. The last player remaining after everyone else has been eliminated is the winner.

There are a few cases when a player might not have much chance of winning (all their WRITE pieces erased) or no chance at all (all their ERASE pieces erased). In some of those cases, it might be possible for that player to force a stalemate if the other player's position is weak enough. If it's clear that one player will eventually win, players are encourage to concede. If it's not clear, just play and in case of a stalemate (agreed by both players) the winner is the player with more spare pieces outside the board. In case of a draw, count the total number pips.

Inspiration

The idea for this game came to me as I asked myself what icehouse game would a friend of mine (who works programming) like. In the 80s this friend of mine had some magazines from his father (Maybe Scientific American) and in one, they talked about computer programs fighting in a simulated memory. The programs where made with a simple language and they could modify the simulated memory trying to disrupt the opponent programs. I even made a couple of really simple versions of this concept for the Amiga computer back in the day. I just tried adapting this concept to an icehouse game, but instead of building the program and just letting it run (not much interaction there), I gave the player control of the instruction marker, deciding which instruction would be run next (simulating possible loops and if-then conditions that the program might have). This way, the players take the part of simple computer AIs :)

Other ways to play the game

Even though the game was created with the Icehouse system in mind, and uses some of its special characteristics such as pip number and stacking (to a certain degree), it can be played with other game systems such as the [Piecepack](#) game system or a standard deck of cards (plus some pawns). The pdf linked below contains the rules for all three game systems.

External Links

- A pdf with the rules to the game for all three game systems it can be played with, including playaids can be downloaded from BGG: [VirusFight-Univ.pdf](#)
- Virus Fight is listed on [BoardGameGeek](#)
- Virus Fight is listed on the [piecepack wiki](#)

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Competitions

This game was entered in the Winter 2007-08 Icehouse Games Design Competition. Even though it didn't seem to perform very well overall, it was the only game to win against the winner in the individual pairings. Also, the number of votes was too small to be totally conclusive, so if you like abstract games with no random elements, don't let that deter you from giving it a try. And if you do, don't hesitate to post your opinion/questions/suggestions on the discussion page.

Entered in the [Icehouse Game Design Competition, Winter 2008](#)

Winner: [Martian 12s](#) - Runners-Up: [WreckTangle](#), [Timelock](#)

Other Entries (in alphabetical order): [Chicken Run](#), [Hunt](#), [Martian Gunslinger](#), [Timberland](#), **Virus Fight**

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